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ABSTRACT

A competency based model of affective teaching is proposed for training teachers of students with Hispanic background in the southwestern United States. The GAC (generic affective competencies) model is described in terms of the adjustment needs of Hispanics in public school. Three competency clusters are outlined: creating the affective climate; managing conflicts, crises, and the classroom; and using positive classroom management practices. A brief study report confirms the validity of the GAC procedures. It is concluded that the GAC model is potentially significant in such areas as motivating students to achieve, rewarding students for correct responses and adaptive behavior, and modeling optional ways of coping with stress and managing social problems. (CL)

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"Generic affective teaching competencies, and personal efficacy needs of Hispanic students in public schools"

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Introduction

Meeting the educational needs of students from culturally-diverse backgrounds has become an increasingly problemmatic issue for many public schools in the United States (Henderson, 1980; Pifer, 1980). In general, the learning problems reported about students with limited English-speaking ability have in many instances seemed related to language barriers and culturally-related attitudes which may inhibit instructional effectiveness and individual motivation.

Though bilingual educational programs have historically been incorporated by local school districts where significant numbers of bilingual students are enrolled, the effectiveness of bilingual instruction has yet to be adequately determined through research (Gradisnik, 1980).

Specific issues addressed in the current report concern the rapidly growing population of Hispanic-speaking students in Texas and the larger Southwest. The exact learning needs as well as the affective needs of these youths are not clear at present. In particular, research findings would appear to be sparse concerning the social and emotional adjustment needs of Mexican-American students who are learning handicapped in some way.

Some commentators believe that the special educational needs of Mexican-American students in the Southwest have been largely ignored by the public school system and policies set in state legislatures (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1975). Some of the Commission's findings about these students included:

1. retained in grade at more than twice the rate for Anglos
2. grossly overrepresented in low ability group classes and underrepresented in high ability group classes
3. two and one/half times as likely as Anglos to be placed in special classes for the educable mentally retarded

In addition, it has been reported that Mexican-Americans are on the average, 2-3 grade levels behind Anglo peers; 30% complete high school; and 85% of Mexican-Americans in urban-ghetto areas drop-out of school prior to graduation (Pifer, 1980).

Given these findings, Mexican-American students might be expected to experience an array of social and emotional adjustment difficulties. Several reports have, in fact, described specific problems of identity and motivation as being widespread among Hispanic students (Ramirez, 1977; DeBlassie, 1976; Johnson and Hernandez, 1970).

Given the lack of budgetary support for bilingual education programs and the diversity of learning needs within the Hispanic culture itself (Ramirez, 1977), it seems essential that a network of optional instructional strategies is identified and evaluated. It has been argued that bilingual programs of any 'design' will prove unsuccessful without more effective 'implementation' (Henderson, 1980). Stated differently, programs have, thus far, seemed ineffective for meeting many of the learning needs exhibited by students whose cultural background and behaviors contrast with norms of the public school. Even when language-related

achievements are reported, specific problems of 'cultural alienation' (Ramirez, 1977), 'personal inefficacy' (Henderson, 1980), and inadequate 'motivation' (DeBlassie, 1976) have seemed pervasive.

The related issues of teacher preparation and training would thus appear to be a most critical concern regarding bilingual students who exhibit social or emotional adjustment difficulties. What kinds of training are needed for teachers who work with students who are bilingual and disturbed? In what ways are classroom teachers of any kind (e.g. regular, special, bilingual) able to meet the 'affective' learning needs of an individual or group of students? With particular reference to this report, are there special competencies needed to enhance the social and emotional learning needs of Hispanic students? A lack of adequately trained teachers represents a serious problem regarding the affective needs of Hispanic students. Pifer (1980) noted that a teacher who happens to be bilingual is not automatically qualified to undertake bilingual instruction.

A competency-based model of 'affective' teaching (Pattavina and Ramirez, 1980; Gotts, Pattavina, Goodman and Rodriguez, 1978) presented in this report seems closely alligned with the affective learning needs reported about students of Hispanic background in Texas' public schools. The model, described as "generic affective competencies" (GAC), comprises three dimensions of teaching effectiveness which normally have not been included in teacher preparation or in-service training programs. Stated most simply

the 'generic affective competencies' are those required by any teacher attempting to 'motivate', 'manage', and 'involve' students who are vulnerable in educational settings.

Included in this report are 1) a description of the GAC 'model', 2) a description of learning needs of Hispanic-speaking students, 3) a summary of consensual-validation research activities.

School adjustment and the personal efficacy needs of Hispanic students

Any number of different social or emotional adjustment difficulties may prevent a student from achieving their full educational potential. An individual's feelings, beliefs and behaviors are critical in the instructional process, but have been largely overlooked in reports about the learning needs of bilingual students (Henderson, 1980). Students who exhibit behavior that contrasts with the norms of the school culture are especially likely to experience 'personal efficacy' needs preemptive to effective learning.

The source of many learning difficulties exhibited by Hispanic students has often been attributed to factors associated specifically with the Mexican-American culture, the family structure in particular. It has been suggested in different reports that Mexican-American students lack adequate achievement motivation; or that strong family alliance peculiar to the culture serve to inhibit drives for individual growth (Ramirez, 1977).

It is doubtful, however, that school difficulties of Mexican-Americans are the result of uneducated parents failing to stress the value of education. Evans and Anderson (1973) found the depressed achievement of Mexican-American students in junior high school more related to values and experiences associated with the culture of poverty rather than familial apathy about school achievement.

Specific language problems are no doubt a complicating factor in the educational process. If a youngster has inadequate language skills for reading, writing and verbal interaction, then one can anticipate further adjustment problems in public schools. Social and emotional maladjustment have been associated with reading failure at all age and grade levels, regardless of gender or cultural-ethnic background. Moreover, these problems have seemed excessive with children from low-income families (Hewett and Forness, 1978).

It seems unlikely that the achievement and adjustment difficulties reported about Mexican-American students can be understood as simply a problem of either a) individual deficit (e.g. IQ; achievement motivation) or b) language interference (Cordova, 1970). Rather, the problem appears to be more complex, involving the social dynamics of interpersonal relationships in classrooms and the larger school climate and the way these interact with adjustment characteristics of individual students. When school causes one to become detached from traditional values and beliefs, and one feels powerless in the competitive learning structure, there may be a related development of socially unapproved behavior.

Cordova (1970) reported that Mexican-American students are often rejected from full participation in school because they're unable to acquire the skills necessary for acculturation.

In a related way, Anderson and Evans (1973) examined the influences which family socialization practices of Anglos and

Mexican-Americans may have on student adjustment and achievement. The Mexican-Americans were found to have experienced less independence training and were granted little autonomy in decision-making. In addition, the Mexican-Americans (boys in particular) had little confidence in their ability to succeed in school and were fatalistic about the future.

Student questionnaires were used to examine the notion of 'cultural clash' between Mexican-American students and public schools (Ramirez, 1970). Significant differences in value-orientation were found between Mexican-Americans and Anglos relative to a) submissiveness to parents and b) separation of sex-roles.

Bryant and Meadow (1976) investigated the manner in which the adjustment problems of Mexican-American adolescents may be related to cultural or value-orientations. In their findings, the researchers reported that school behavior of some Mexican-American adolescents seemed influenced by cultural themes. Public school was seen by the students as:

1) a place where teachers were perceived and treated like their parents, and thus, were targets of rebellion

2) a place lacking strict external prohibition of encounters with the opposite sex

3) a public arena where one brought honor or shame to the family

4) an institution where individuals are expected to value competition and success

In support of these findings, Ramirez (1977) described a model of 'identity conflict' relative to the experiences of Mexican-American students in public school. Accordingly, things which were learned at home by the Mexican-American student about personal esteem and aspiration may come into question in the Anglo school. As a result, the student may feel rejected, alienated and self-doubting in the school atmosphere. Subsequently, there will be a growing resentment towards either a) the family or b) the dominant Anglo group in school, depending on who the student identifies with the most.

Such a model of 'identity formation' (and conflict) illustrates how the child and culture are integrated, and how further growth is dependent on the effectiveness of this integration. The culture into which the child is born maintains a powerful influence on the individual's psychological development, or affective adjustment. This effect is reinforced continuously by the family and the community, or the child's social milieu. The child's developing self-concept; expectations of intrinsic behaviors; and personal incentives or motives are all related to the expectations held by those with whom he interacts. Thus, the 'bicultural' child in our society is caught in a dilemma that says one culture must be rejected in order to assimilate the other.

It has been found in a number of studies that teacher expectations can significantly influence student learning and behavior (Brophy and Good, 1974). The most negative expectations

concerned minority-group students and ones who exhibit adjustment problems in class. Thus, disturbed or maladjusted students of Hispanic background would seem to be at a considerable disadvantage. Because low SES Hispanics may lack the kinds of 'social competence' from which teachers have been found to develop expectations about future behavior, subsequent teacher-student interactions are less likely to concern academic instruction and more likely to concern discipline and control. In another study the achievement problems of Mexican-Americans have been seen by some researchers to be the result of specific teacher bias (Johnson, 1970).

Findings from the research on teacher-student relationships help to identify how teacher-behavior and a student's adjustment-behaviors can become mutually reinforcing. Brophy and Good (1974) reported that negative teacher expectations are likely to be followed by such things as a) decreases in instructional-time and b) increases in interactions concerning discipline and control. These kinds of interactions seem likely to interact in a negative way with perceptions of 'learned helplessness' or 'external locus of control', which often are associated with students who are 'culturally diverse' (Henderson, 1980). As a result, the student may come to anticipate learning failure as a result of inability, or related to situations which are beyond their control. In either case, there may also be a negative affective reaction such as withdrawal, counter-aggression or anxiety. These kinds of personal inefficacy may represent a significant barrier to further educational progress if not addressed by instructional programming and classroom

interactions.

The issue of instruction for the Hispanic with social or emotional adjustment difficulties is complex and will more than likely require a network of strategies to achieve any sort of resolution (Almanza and Mosley, 1980). One area of strategic concern is that of teacher preparation. Are there specific or additional skills needed by teachers who are responsible for the instruction of Hispanic students? If so, what are these skills? There seems to be a scarcity of empirical literature pertaining to these questions.

Is it conceivable that academic, social and emotional learning difficulties are generic in nature across cultural or ethnic-factors? To the extent that empirical research would support this notion, the implications for teacher preparation would not differ vastly from current movements in education towards generic certification and training.

What are different strategies and resources a teacher could presently choose to incorporate with classroom management practices in order to enhance the adjustment, learning behavior, achievement and sense of value or relevance for Mexican-American students? Apart from specific language instruction, there would appear to be several categorical areas of teaching and classroom management that could be modified in accordance with an individual's learning needs. The GAC model is presented as one way of conceptualizing a set of teaching behaviors related to the affective learning

needs of students who are handicapped and/or culturally diverse.

Summary of adjustment needs of Hispanics in public school

To summarize, the learning and adjustment needs of Mexican-American students will need to be addressed more fully by the public school system at all grade levels. Problems associated with academic achievement, social assimilation and emotional growth have seemed related to an interaction of student adjustment behaviors related to socio-economic status and cultural-ethnic background, and negative, stereotyped expectations by teachers. The extent to which public schools are able to accommodate the academic and affective learning needs found to exist among Hispanic students would seem to be influenced partially by the accuracy of how these problems are identified. Subsequently, the manner in which schools are able to respond programmatically will depend largely on the capacity of teachers to develop improved attitudes and skills for interacting with students who exhibit affective-domain learning needs. Inservice training and needs assessment activities are of vital importance to bolster the responsiveness of schools to the needs of these students. There are probably a number of procedural and interactional strategies that can be adapted by school administrators, diagnosticians and individual classroom teachers if the problem is to find adequate resolution.

Generic affective competencies: a common bond

"Generic affective competencies (Gotts et al, 1978; Pattavina and Ramirez, 1980; Pattavina, 1981) are teaching skills that seem important for meeting a range of instructional objectives with affectively handicapped students, regardless of one's theoretical orientation. Three broad categories of affective teaching behaviors identified in the model are those required by any effective teacher who attempts to motivate, understand, involve, manage and teach individuals who are vulnerable in educational settings. (see Table ___ following)

Table ____

"Generic affective competencies model: Competency clusters"

I. Establishing the affective climate of the classroom
II. Managing conflicts and crises
III. Using positive classroom management practices

The generic affective competency model identifies how teachers can systematically attend to the social and emotional learning needs of students through specific practices of instruction, interaction and classroom management. By establishing interactions and relationships with students in ways that generate effective patterns of disposition, communication and reward (Thomas, 1978), it seems likely that the opportunities for learning can become increased continuously (Morse, 1979). Classroom teachers are understood in this regard to potentially have significant influence on the perceptions, feelings, thinking patterns, and behavioral habits of 'vulnerable' adolescents.

The list of generic affective competency statements described in this report are the result of (1) a review of relevant literature, (2) direct observation, (3) consensual validation field testing, and (4) a revision of the competency statements based on the outcome of the consensual validation. Subsequent research activities being conducted or designed need to ultimately achieve an empirical validation of the competencies over a period of time. This will involve a need to determine the value of the GAC^{S} for promoting child change, and the degree to which these competencies can be acquired by individuals through training.

The specific generic affective competencies are those skills, knowledges, and attitudes which are important for a teacher's successful dealing with affective domain behaviors of exceptional students. It may be that there is considerable commonality of these competencies with those required by any teacher to work effectively with affective domain behaviors of any secondary or elementary level students.

The competency statements developed through the process described in the preceding section are presented in Table 1 following. As already stated, the 'generic affective competency' model incorporates three broad domains of teaching behavior. These include (a) establishing an affective climate, (b) managing behavior conflicts and crises, and (c) using positive classroom management practices.

In a general way, the first category relates to the student's 'affective' domain from an experiential frame of reference. The

second category addresses the student's 'behavioral' domain. The third category encompasses the 'cognitive' domain, in reference to academic learning for secondary affective growth; and direct affective instruction for meeting a student's primary affective needs. Each dimension of teaching competency is a reflection of the different ways that affect is exhibited, experienced and has proven influential in the process of classroom learning.

Table 1

"Generic affective competency statements" (n=41)

I. Creating Affective Climate

1. Use "accepting" rather than "rejecting" language
2. Focus on feelings and reflect them accurately
3. Plan for success by gearing expectations and activities to each student's level of achievement
4. Make use of students' interests to enhance the meaningfulness of activities
5. Involve students in creating limits and learning activities
6. Give clear, simple instructions, one at a time
7. Initiate contact with resistive students
8. Recognize and acknowledge student efforts
9. Give a student corrections without criticism

II. Managing Conflicts, Crises and the Classroom

10. Accept and recognize feelings accurately
11. Leave responsibility for resolution with the student
12. Communicate confidence in the student's ability to learn and grow
13. Invite, but do not force communication with a student
14. Maintain a goal-oriented, problem solving approach to conflict
15. View conflict as an opportunity for student growth
16. Use "I messages" to convey feelings
17. Control personal impulses in order to choose a response which will de-escalate the conflict
18. Disengage from arguments to avoid power struggles
19. Recognize areas of least effectiveness regarding the management of student conflicts
20. Model effective alternatives for students to cope with conflict
21. Admit mistakes to students
22. Convey calm confidence during conflict and do not blame
23. Establish contact with a student after conflict with them

III. Using Positive Classroom Management Practices

24. Structure the environment and activities to facilitate group learning
25. Use questions rather than statements to remind students of limits
26. Depersonalize rules
27. Monitor several activities simultaneously
28. Be enthusiastic regarding activities
29. Selectively ignore behaviors that are not overly disruptive
30. Offer alternatives rather than commands
31. Remind students of previous successes
32. Use humor to decontaminate stressful situations
33. Control behavior through proximity and non-verbal feedback
34. Avoid punitive, rejecting and absolute responses
35. State expectations clearly and briefly
36. Give disciplinarian feedback to students in private to avoid a ripple effect
37. Do not force students to make 'pledges of good conduct'
38. Allow students to search for alternatives to punishment
39. Reinterpret adult limits as protections
40. Leave responsibility for change with the student
41. Allow students to experience natural and logical consequences of behavior

Consensual validation of the generic affective competencies

Procedures

In December of 1979, a small group of bilingual education teachers at the elementary level (n=8) were administered a self-report questionnaire concerning the relevance of the GAC^S for working with Hispanic students. Using the Generic Affective Competency Self-Rating scale (GACSR), these teachers were asked to rate the degree of importance they considered for each of the 41 competency statements. Responses for each item were made on a Likert-type scale as follows:

1.- absolutely essential

2 - somewhat helpful

3 - unsure

4 - not too helpful

5 - not at all necessary

All eight of the teachers who participated in the study were female. They ranged in teaching experience from 2 years to 21 years, with a mean of 9.1 years.

Results

Results of this self-report study of the GAC^S are shown in Table 2 following. Responses to each item have been clustered into three cells - 'helpful (1 and 2), unsure (3), not helpful (4 and 5)'.

The findings shown in Table 2 are supportive of the GAC^S relative to the affective learning needs of Hispanic students. Only GAC^S # 6, 18, 26, 35 and 38 were not seen as helpful by a majority of the respondants.

Though only a limited number of teachers participated in this study (n = 8), the currently reported findings would warrant further investigation of the kinds of teaching competencies discussed in this report.

Table 2

GACSR responses of bilingual education teachers

GACSR item #	# of responses: helpful	unsure	not helpful
1	6	1	1
2	7	1	
3	7	1	
4	7	1	
5	6	2	
6	3	4	1
7	8		
8	7	1	
9	6	2	
10	7	1	
11	6	2	
12	8		
13	8		
14	8		
15	8		
16	7	1	

Table 2

GACSR responses of bilingual education teachers

GACSR item #	# of responses: helpful	unsure	not helpful
17	8		
18	4	3	1
19	7	1	
20	7	1	
21	7	1	
22	8		
23	6	2	
24	8		
25	5	2	1
26	4	2	2
27	7	1	
28	8		
29	7	1	
30	8		
31	6	1	1
32	6	2	

Table 2

GACSR responses of bilingual education teachers

GACSR item #	# of responses: helpful	unsure	not helpful
33	6	2	
34	5	3	
35	3	5	
36	7	1	
37	6	2	
38	3	3	2
39	7	1	
40	7	1	
41	5	1	2

Discussion and conclusions

Any number of different social or emotional adjustment difficulties may prevent a student from achieving their full educational potential. A student's feelings, beliefs and behaviors are critical factors in the instructional process, but have been largely overlooked in reports about the learning needs of bilingual students of Hispanic background.

Limited self-esteem may distort an individual's experiences or inhibit their participation in learning activities. Maladaptive or unexpected behavior patterns exhibited in the classroom can seriously reduce instructional interactions, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Value-related conflicts and 'defensive' reasoning processes may delimit school motivation and compliance. Any of these occurrences can precipitate a negative self-fulfilling prophecy and subsequently influence a teacher's evaluative perceptions and instructional behaviors.

Hispanic students have seemed especially vulnerable in educational settings, both academically and affectively. The learning and adjustment problems of these students have often been seen as issues related to cultural-alienation and social-rejection, as well as the more encompassing influences of poverty. As a result, promoting a sense of 'confidence' and 'control' about learning outcomes is an important way for teachers to meet the needs for personal efficacy which Hispanic students may experience in school.

Simply being bilingual will not qualify an individual to effectively teach Hispanic students who are experiencing social

or emotional adjustment difficulties. Teachers will need a range of skills whereby an individual student's affective learning needs are able to be addressed through systematic practices of classroom management and instruction.

'Generic affective competencies' are an interrelated set of teaching behaviors which have been seen to be important for dealing with students whose social or emotional learning difficulties prevent adequate educational achievement. The GAC model incorporates three major clusters of teaching competencies: a) establishing climate, trust and rapport, b) managing conflicts and crises and c) using positive classroom management practices.

The generic affective competencies are an outgrowth of observed teaching behavior, theoretical considerations and consensual validation research. In formulating the list of statements, the authors drew from psychodynamic, developmental and behavioral theories of learning. The skills in part assume a broad conceptual basis in mediational learning theory, as opposed to simple associative or reinforcement learning theory. Children are viewed as mediating organisms who are continually acting and reacting not only to external events around them, but also to internal phenomena and information processing capacities that develop with age, exposure, and teaching in a systematically spiralling fashion. As a result, the GAC^{S} are potentially significant in the instructional process for a) motivating students to achieve, b) rewarding students for correct responses and adaptive behavior, c) involving a student's interest and

attention, d) responding positively to conflicts and crises, e) perceiving the needs and experiences of individual or groups of students and f) demonstrating or modeling optional ways of coping with stress and managing social problems.

The relevance of the GAC^{S} for working with Hispanic students was supported by consensual validation research findings involving a small group of bilingual education teachers in the Dallas-Ft. Worth, Texas, area.

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